



How do we know the Bible is real?

Every year I encourage the confirmation students to ask questions - all kinds of questions - because having our questions answered is how we learn and grow in our faith. Here's an example of one of those questions. It's quite likely that this question has crossed your mind at some time in life: "How do we know that the Bible isn't just a bunch of stories that were made up?"

It's a great question -especially in a time when people would try to have us believe the crazy idea that there is no such thing as absolute truth. (Which would mean, I guess, that $2+2= _$ can have whatever answer you feel like that day.) How do we know that the Bible is what we as Christians say it is: The very word of God and absolute truth?

For starters, the Bible itself states this:

... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Tim. 3:15_17

"We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty." 2 Peter 1:16

"Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." 2 Peter 1:20_21

"And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe." 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Those passages remind us that the Scriptures are not stories that were made up, but are actual events (note the "eyewitnesses" in 2 Peter 1:16). Not only that but whatever was written was not simply what some guys decided to write about. Everything that is written in the Bible has been recorded because no less than God wanted it there and no less than God prompted to writers to write exactly what they did ("men spoke from *God*").

There is also abundant archaeological and historical evidence that supports the things written in the Scriptures. Paul Maier's book *In the Fullness of Time* is an excellent book detailing much of this archaeological and historical evidence.

But even though there is much evidence to support it, we cannot ultimately "prove" that the Bible is God's absolute truth. Believing that the Bible is the absolute truth that it claims to be is something that must be taken on faith. And it is the Holy Spirit - the very spirit of God - who leads us to trust that God's Word is absolute truth.

The apostle Paul reminds us, in 1 Corinthians chapter one and two, that faith in the truth of God's word in the Bible comes only through the power of the Holy Spirit. So, when you come to place your faith in

the Biblical truth that Jesus Christ is "the way, the truth and the life" (the "way" to a restored relationship with God, the source of absolute "truth" and eternal "life"), you are evidence of the Holy Spirit's power working in your life. You are evidence not only of the truth of the Bible, but evidence also of the power of God's words recorded in the Bible.

Thanks for asking,
Pastor David

Send your questions to pastor@livingwordlutheran.net